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563 In cases where the Chinese authorities eventually deposed a T'u-ssu and took his territory and its population under direct Chinese administration, Chinese who had long been domiciled among the Monguors naturally became prominent people under the new dispensation. Thus it is plain that even though the Chinese civil officials were appointed by the T'u-ssu themselves, and not by the higher Chinese authorities, their influence promoted the process of the absorption of the Monguors by Chinese culture.

In the disintegration of the old Monguor society the personal example of the T'u-ssu themselves had a great effect. In the long period of relative peace and stability along the frontier under Manchu rule, the T'u-ssu ceased to receive fresh increments of prestige in their old capacity as military commanders and "wardens of the marches." They, therefore, naturally began to turn toward the standards of prestige accepted in the settled Chinese population. It became usual for T'u-ssu to marry the daughters of rich Chinese officials, or the half-Chinese daughters of other T'u-ssu who had married Chinese. There was thus introduced into the households of the T'u-ssu a Chinese "fine lady" point of view; these ladies despised the costume of the Monguor women as barbarous, they did not learn the Monguor language, their children received a Chinese home education and were sent to Chinese schools, and it thus became more and more common to find T'u-ssu who were unable even to speak with their subjects in their own language. Following the fashion set by their chiefs, many Monguors married the daughters of Chinese domiciled in the clan or Chinese from outside, and as this custom spread a great many Monguors in all the clans came to be ashamed of their Monguor extraction, repudiated their origin, and professed to be of Chinese origin.

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426 Still another disruptive factor was that many T'u-ssu, by mortgaging parts of their territories to Chinese merchants and to lamaseries, as security for loans, lost control over the revenue from land taxes. Under these conditions they still retained the power to requisition corvée labor services; but the exercise of this power emphasized the contrast between the privileges of the chiefs and the obligations of their subjects, and weakened the bonds of loyalty that had once united the nobility and the commoners.

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661 In the meantime, the T'u-ssu institution was also becoming corrupt from within. As the administrative system of the clan was so closely geared to the institution of the corvée, or obligatory labor and services, and military power depended on unpaid conscription, only a few officials received allocations of land, the income from which served as salary. The majority of the minor officials depended on bribery for their cash income, there being unlimited opportunities for bribery in the collection of land and other taxes in the form of gifts from families and individuals who wanted to be excused from compulsory services. Since it was profitable to hold such

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661 an official position, there was bribery also in the competition for official appointments, and thus the whole administration of the Monguor clans became thoroughly corrupt. The taxable body came to be regarded as a melon to be sliced. Apart from what was absorbed in the lower ranks through corruption, all revenue collected was the perquisite of the T'u-ssu himself. Since nothing was done for public welfare, there were no schools, there was no budget for education, nor was there any expenditure for building roads or bridges or for the upkeep of administrative buildings, because all such work was done through the levying of obligatory labor. Monguor carpenters, bricklayers, and other artisans in addition to unskilled labor were available through the institution of obligatory labor services.

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563 During the process of the disintegration of the Monguor society, it remained none the less a going concern up to a certain point. As long as the T'u-ssu retained more than a certain minimum of power and wealth, it was to the advantage of the Chinese officials to cooperate with them in certain ways. Up to this point, therefore, the individual Monguor, even though he suffered from the decay of the society of which he was a part, found it impossible to escape and strike out for himself. If he tried to leave his village and settle in Chinese territory, the Chinese officials would return him to the jurisdiction of his hereditary T'u-ssu. Once the wealth and influence of the T'u-ssu had declined below the minimum, however, it was no longer worth the while of Chinese officials to cooperate with them. At this point the Chinese began to abolish or override the privileges of the T'u-ssu, to take the Monguor districts under their direct administration, and to treat the Monguors in the same way as Chinese. An example of this changing attitude of the Chinese officials has already been referred to in the case of the impoverished Chao T'u-ssu who was unable to afford the expenses of investiture and promptly had his office discontinued. An earlier case was that of the Ch'en T'u-ssu, a supercilious and over-confident man who was so oppressive in his demands for taxes and corvées that he was impeached before the Chinese court by his own subjects, about the year 1875. His territory was confiscated, his subjects became ordinary Chinese subjects, and he lost both the office and the title of T'u-ssu.

The Yeh T'u-ssu who did not fight the Muslim rebellion had his territory confiscated, was deposed, and he and his subjects became ordinary Chinese subjects.

The latest news I have had from Hsining since the new Communist rulers of China have taken possession of that region is that the T'u-ssu institution has been abolished, that the Monguor women and men have been ordered to change their peculiar Monguor style of dressing and to adopt Chinese costume, and that orders have been given to establish schools in the Monguor villages under Chinese teachers devoted to the new ideology. The two-thousand-year-old Chinese instinct for absorb-

to make up his retinue, and it even happens that a couple of men are asked for from former tributaries. The subjects are thus liable to the corvées of the monastery and at the same time to Chinese official corvées.

Administration of Justice

All the subjects of the monasteries are liable to the Chinese courts of justice. It would seem logical to have abolished all the old courts of justice existing at the monasteries, but all intendants still dispense justice to their subjects, expose at the gate of their intendancy the instruments of torture, and have their own jails. The intendants of Erh-ku-lung, Kumbum and Seerkok are even recognized officially by the Amban as ch'ien-hu, i.e., civil officials having the right to judge subjects.

In 1916 the minor Living Buddha of the monastery of Dia-ik, fired by ambition and knowing my good relations with the Amban, importuned me for weeks to have me recommend him for the office of ch'ien-hu. He became ch'ien-hu not only of his subjects, but of the three former tributary Tibetan tribes depending on his previous incarnations. In 1917, with an air of exulting pride, he broke the news to me of having obtained in Peking the title of Hutukhtu. It is hard for a western mind to unravel these administrative mysteries.

The subjects enjoy the right of bringing suit at the Chinese courts, but often they do not do so for fear of retaliation by the intendancies, which they are unable to match. However, since the Republic, more and more cases have been initiated by subjects who, victims of crying injustices, have plucked up their courage to challenge their intendants, because their minds were not insulated from the modern principles taught by teachers and officials. Notwithstanding the change in the social psychology of the subjects, the intendants, the builders of big fortunes, continue to plant in the hearts of their subjects the seeds of aversion and hatred against themselves. Many of them collect the rent from their subjects with measures greater than the legal one, compelling them to fill them to the point where the grain spills on the ground, and not allowing them to collect the spilled surplus, which they appropriate. Being the most important businessmen in the country, they impose corvées on the subjects in order to carry on their own business, and when the patience of the subjects is worn thin, the clash comes, causing the ruin of the monastery. Such were the conditions prevailing between the subjects and the monasteries in 1910-1920. The monasteries had in the end succeeded in maintaining a firm grip on their subjects, notwithstanding the aim of the regulations, decreed after the revolt of 1723, to withdraw them from the baneful influence of the monasteries.

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The power of the lamas consisted in the number ^{175x} of their subject tribes and their expansive territorial ^[66] possessions. Their properties were confiscated, and their subjects became subjects of the Chinese officials, liable to their corvees, and subject to their land taxes. The revolt had ruined forever the power of the lamas. Then followed a lot more regulations (Monguors II: 34, 49).

However, nothing was changed in the regime of the Monguor institution. Their extensive properties remained intact, and their subjects continued under the administration of their t'u-ssu, because they had been faithful for centuries to the empire, and because this time their support had been of untold value to the army. Even T'u-ssu Lu was especially rewarded for his services, and received more new subjects: the 8 Tibetan villages in the Cho Tzu Shan region, which had belonged to the Khoshot princes of Kokonor, numbering 453 families, totaling 2,365 persons (Monguors I: 33).

This terrible revolt, which had threatened the very existence of Huangchung as part of Kansu Province and the empire, ended with the annexation of Kokonor to the empire, the ruin of the lama institution in Huang-^[75] chung, and the stabilization of the regime of the t'u-ssu and Monguors in Huangchung. Thanks to the connivance of the Huangchung lamas and Tibetans with the Kokonor Khoshots, all of them seethed with hatred against the empire.

In 1725, the revolt having been quelled, the com-^{175x} mandery of Hsining became a prefecture and the So-⁶³¹ of Nienpei a subprefecture. According to one of the thirteen articles in the memorandum, presented to the throne by the Governor General, Nien Keng-yao, the building was started of three cities in the northern valley of Hsining, in Tatung, in Pe-ta, and in Yung Nan, which countries formerly belonged to the Kokonor Khoshots. Garrisons were appointed in order to forestall inroads of nomads and Jungars, and to provide easy communications between the two cities of Kanchow and Hsining. Tatung became a commandery (*Annals of Hsining* 1: 21b).

It had been noted that in 1647 after the defeat of the Mohammedans of Kanchow on the Tatung River, trying to compel the Mohammedans of Hsining to follow them in the revolt, Chinese of Kanchow who had participated in the expedition dared not return to their original countries, but settled in the extensive pastures of Tatung and Pe-ta, recognized the lordship of the Mongol proprietors and started farming and building houses. It has been noted also that in 1693, after fifty years, the assistant commander of Hsining, T'u-ssu ^{175x} Li Hsia, had reported that already more than 10,000 ⁶³¹ families were living there. The census of 1730 noted ¹⁶² that the population of these settlements, started in 1647, was composed of Chinese, Monguors, Mohammedans, and Tibetans, living in twenty-two villages. The population of two villages was entirely composed of Chinese,